



Champion body builder Luke Wood's advice for having the body you want: You are what you eat!

This weekend, over Friday and Saturday the Annual Mr. Beginner & National Bodybuilding and Fitness Championships of Aruba will take place at the Renaissance Convention Center in Oranjestad. The weigh-in and registration will take place on Friday, the actual competition to choose Mr. Aruba 2005 will be on Saturday evening starting at 8:00 p.m. The Aruba Bodybuilding and Powerlifting Association, (A.B.P.A.) organizers of the event have invited Australia's #1 Body Builder for 2005, Mr. Luke Wood to participate as guest poser and lecturer.

After traveling halfway around the globe, and still feeling quite jet lagged from his twenty-five hour journey, Mr. Wood kindly sat with aspiring Aruban body builders in the Caribbean room of the Renaissance Resort on Thursday evening to share his knowledge and experience on attaining a championship level physique. Mr. Wood began body building training at the age of seventeen, and won his first competition, the Mr. Teen Australia title, at the age of eighteen, taking first place. At the age of twenty-three he was awarded his pro card in body building, which gave him the distinction of being the youngest to ever turn pro in Australia.

Using a Q & A format, he answered questions so that the audience could get the information they really wanted to know. Though much of the discussion was about building up, the information was of enormous value to anyone wishing to have a fitter, healthier body, and one basic premise he emphasized strongly was that you are what you eat.

Mr. Wood pointed out the a popular misconception of novice body builders that wish to acquire mass is thinking that by simply working out and eating everything in sight, including lots of high fat, high carbohydrate foods, they will get bigger muscle mass. In actuality, it would appear that carbohydrates need to be cut, proteins increased, and when energy is low, an increase of "clean" fats, like avocado or peanut butter, is better for increasing energy. Mr. Wood particularly emphasized the importance of eating what he termed "clean" foods, which would basically be unprocessed, natural foods, free from chemicals and preservatives or refined sugars, hydrogenated fats, and salt. He professed that he consumes around 6000 calories a day, mostly made up of protein, and he uses many supplements, but emphasized that supplements are not substitute for a proper diet.

In addition, one thing he pointed out is that some people, like him, are blessed with the proper genetics that allow them to build up the massive muscle and body shape that wins titles, but there are those that may never be able to do it, simply because of their inherited body type. He expressed true admiration for determined individuals that have to work so much harder to achieve competition level bodies without that benefit.

Another essential for all body builders and health is of course, pure water. Mr. Wood confessed that he drinks at least two gallons or more during a long flight to prevent water retention. He encouraged all those attending to consume no less than a gallon per day, particularly for body builders living in Aruba's tropical climate. This prompted all the steering committee of the ABPA to immediately reach for the pitchers of water that were handy on the dais and consume several glasses.

In a lively give and take discussion, Mr. Wood candidly answered many questions fielded by an audience of both men and women that were interested in not only bodybuilding, but also general fitness and nutrition. He spoke of the focus and dedication necessary to being a professional body builder; the attention to diet and the drive to work out everyday, despite fatigue from working a regular job.

This weekend's competition promises to be an interesting event, with what is termed in Papiamentu "vitamins for the eye" or better known around the world as "eye candy." Fortunately, one can attend the event and consume all the "eye candy" they want, without breaking their health regimen!